

Department of Veterans Affairs

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goal, an individualized written rehabilitation plan (IWRP) will be developed as indicated in § 21.84 of this part.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3106(b))

(d) *Responsibility for determining the need for a period of extended evaluation.* A counseling psychologist in the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Division shall determine whether a period of extended evaluation is needed.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3106(c))

[49 FR 40814, Oct. 18, 1984, as amended at 53 FR 50956, Dec. 19, 1988; 54 FR 37332, Sept. 8, 1989; 62 FR 17707, Apr. 11, 1997]

§ 21.58 Redetermination of employment handicap and serious employment handicap.

(a) *Prior to induction into a program.* A determination as to employment handicap, serious employment handicap, or eligibility for a program of employment services will not be changed except for:

(1) Unmistakable error in fact or law; or

(2) New and material evidence which justifies a change.

(b) *After induction into a program.* (1) The Department of Veterans Affairs will not redetermine a finding of employment handicap, serious employment handicap, or eligibility for a program of employment services subsequent to the veteran's induction into a program because of a reduction in his or her disability rating, including a reduction to 0 percent:

(2) The Department of Veterans Affairs may consider whether a finding of employment handicap should be changed to serious employment handicap when there is an increase in the degree of service-connected disability, or other significant change in the veteran's situation;

(3) A redetermination of employment handicap, serious employment handicap, or eligibility for a program of employment services will be made when there is a clear and unmistakable error of fact or law.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3102, 3106)

(c) *Following rehabilitation or discontinuance.* A veteran's eligibility and

entitlement to assistance must be redetermined in any case in which:

(1) The veteran is determined to be rehabilitated to the point of employability under the provisions of § 21.190;

(2) The veteran is determined to meet the requirements for rehabilitation under the provisions of § 21.196; or

(3) The veteran's program is discontinued under the provisions of § 21.198, except as described in § 21.198(c)(3).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3102, 3111)

§ 21.59 Review and appeal of decisions on eligibility and entitlement.

A veteran may appeal decisions of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment staff on eligibility and entitlement to rehabilitation services to the Board of Veterans Appeals as provided in § 19.2 of Title 38, CFR. However, the veteran or an accredited representative, on his or her behalf, may request administrative review by Central Office prior to filing an appeal to BVA. A case already on appeal to BVA may not be referred to Central Office for administrative review or advisory opinion.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3107(c))

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PANEL

§ 21.60 Vocational Rehabilitation Panel.

(a) *Establishment of the Panel.* A Vocational Rehabilitation Panel will be established at each field facility by the facility head. The purpose of the Panel is to provide technical assistance in the planning of rehabilitation programs for seriously disabled veterans and dependents. This purpose will be most effectively carried out through use of the services of a wide range of professionals to bring the resources of the Department of Veterans Affairs and the community to bear on problems presented in the individual case.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3104(a))

(b) *Composition of the Panel.* The Panel will include, but not be limited to the following:

(1) A counseling psychologist in the VR&C (Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) Division as the chairperson;

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(2) A vocational rehabilitation specialist in VR&C;

(3) A medical consultant from a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center;

(4) A member of the Social Services staff from a Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center; and

(5) Other specialists from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3104(a), 3115(a))

(c) *Appointment to the Panel.* (1) The VR&C (Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment) Officer may not serve as either chairperson or member of the Panel.

(2) The VR&C Officer will arrange for the participation of nonmedical professional staff in the Panel's meetings.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3115(a)(2))

(d) *Scope of Panel review.* The Panel will review each case which has been referred to it in relation to:

(1) Specific reason for the referral; and

(2) Other problem areas which the Panel identifies in the course of its consideration of the case.

(e) *Referral.* A case may be referred to the Panel by:

(1) A counseling psychologist in VR&C;

(2) A vocational rehabilitation specialist in VR&C; or

(3) The VR&C officer.

(f) *Report.* The Panel must prepare a report on its findings and recommendations in each case. The Panel's recommendations may include specific actions which are warranted on the basis of current information, or may identify additional information needed to provide a sounder basis for planning the veteran's program of rehabilitation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3104(a))

§ 21.62 Duties of the Vocational Rehabilitation Panel.

(a) *Consultation requested.* The panel shall provide technical and consultative services when requested by professional staff of the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&C) Division to:

(1) Assist staff members in planning and carrying out a rehabilitation plan

for seriously disabled veterans and their dependents; and

(2) Consider other cases of individuals eligible for, or being provided assistance under chapter 31 and other programs of education and training administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3104(a))

(b) *Independent living services.* The Panel has a key responsibility to assure that seriously disabled service-connected veterans who need independent living services to increase their independence in daily living are provided necessary services. In carrying out this responsibility the Panel shall review all cases which come before it to assure that the proposed program of vocational rehabilitation or independent living services includes those services necessary to enable the veteran to achieve the goals of the program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3100)

(c) *Dependents.* The specific duties of the Panel with respect to dependents are more fully described §§ 21.3300, 21.3301, 21.3304, 21.4105, and 21.4276 of this part.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3536, 3540, 3541, 3542, 3543)

[54 FR 37332, Sept. 8, 1989]

DURATION OF REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

§ 21.70 Vocational rehabilitation.

(a) *General.* The goal of a vocational rehabilitation program is to:

(1) Evaluate and improve the veteran's ability to achieve a vocational goal;

(2) Provide services needed to qualify for suitable employment;

(3) Enable the veteran to achieve maximum independence in daily living;

(4) Enable the veteran to become employed in a suitable occupation and to maintain suitable employment.

(b) *Vocational rehabilitation program.* This term includes:

(1) The services that are needed for the accomplishment of the purposes of Chapter 31, including such counseling,